



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
MISSOURI FIELD OFFICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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USDA to Conduct Survey about Hired On-Farm Labor

Columbia, Missouri – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will continue its semiannual Agricultural Labor Survey beginning the second half of December. The survey will collect information about hired labor from more than 1300 Missouri farmers and ranchers.

"Labor data are critical to farming operations and important information about the characteristics and activities of hired workers helps administer farm labor programs," said Bob Garino, Missouri State Statistician with USDA-NASS. "The data that farm operators provide through NASS's Agricultural Labor Survey help leaders, associations, and farmers themselves make decisions based on accurate information."

USDA and the U.S. Department of Labor uses the results of this survey to estimate the demand for, and availability of seasonal agricultural workers, establish minimum wage rates for agricultural workers, administer farm labor recruitment and placement service programs, and assist legislators in determining labor policies.

In the survey, NASS asks participants to answer a variety of questions about hired farm labor on their operations, including total number of hired farm workers, hours worked, and wages paid for the weeks of July 12-18 and October 11-17. For their convenience and safety, survey participants have the option to respond by mail or online at agcounts.usda.gov. Survey response is protected by federal law (Title 5 Subtitle A, Public Law 107-347), which keeps respondent identity and answers confidential.

"By asking about two separate reference periods each time we collect data during the year, we are able to publish quarterly data and capture seasonal variation," said Garino. "This approach reduces the number of times we ask farm operations to respond to surveys while ensuring that accurate and timely data are available for anyone conducting research or analyses."

NASS will compile, analyze, and publish survey results in the *Farm Labor* report. All previous *Farm Labor* publications are available online at:

www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Reports_by_Release_Day.

For more information, call the NASS Heartland Regional Field Office at 800-551-1014.

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NASS is the federal statistical agency responsible for producing official data about U.S. agriculture and is committed to providing timely, accurate and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture. We invite you to provide occasional feedback on our products and services. Sign up at http://bit.ly/NASS_Subscriptions and look for the "NASS Data User Community."

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